

SB NEWSLIN @ ALLBBS \$NLIN.901

Amateur Radio Newsline #901 18 Nov 1994

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(RIME users can RO mail to ->35,  
Fidonet users can Netmail to 1:278/309)

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NEWSLINE RADIO - CBBS EDITION #901 - POSTED 11/20/94

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The following is late news about Amateur Radio for Radio  
Amateurs as prepared from NEWSLINE RADIO scripts by the staff of  
the AMATEUR RADIO NEWSLINE, INC. -- formerly the WESTLINK RADIO  
NETWORK. For current information updates, please call

Audio Version of Newsline  
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Los Angeles.....	(213) 462-0008
Los Angeles (Instant Update Line).....	(805) 296-2407
Seattle.....	(206) 368-3969
Seattle.....	(206) 281-8455
Tacoma.....	(206) 927-7373
Louisville.....	(502) 894-8559
Dayton.....	(513) 275-9991
Chicago.....	(708) 289-0423
New York City.....	(718) 353-2801
Melbourne, FL.....	(407) 259-4479

Electronic Hardcopy Version of Newsline  
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GEnie (RTC Bulletin Board).....	m345;1
GEnie (File Library).....	m345;3
Dallas Remote Imaging BBS (DRIG).....	(214) 492-7573
In bulletin number 36	

The Midwest Connection BBS..... (701) 239-2440  
In bulletin number 6 of the ham radio conference  
Delphi.....  
In the ham radio conference  
Internet.....  
In the rec.radio.info newsgroup  
FTP: oak.oakland.edu, archive: pub/hamradio/docs/newsline  
Fidonet, RIME, Intellec, I-Link.....  
In the Ham Radio conferences on those networks  
CompuServe/HamNet..... Coming Soon!

For questions or comments about the text version, contact me at  
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For the latest breaking info call the Instant Update Line listed  
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For further information about the AMATEUR RADIO NEWSLINE,  
please write to us with an SASE at P.O. Box 463, Pasadena, CA  
91102.

Thank You  
NEWSLINE

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Some of the hams of NEWSLINE RADIO...

WA6ITF WB6MQV WB6FDF K6DUE W6RCL N6AHU N6AWE N6TCQ K6PGX N6PNY  
KU8R N8DTN W9JUV KC9RP K9XI KB5KCH KC5UD KC0HF G8AUU WD0AKO DJ0QN  
and many others in the United States and around the globe!!!

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[901]

(\* \* \* \* C L O S E D C I R C U I T A D V I S O R Y \* \* \* \*  
(\* \* \* \* \*  
(\* The following advisory is not necessarily for air over \*  
(\* amateur radio. This is just a reminder that the address \*  
(\* \* \* \* \*

(\* for the Newsline Support Fund is Newsline, in care of \*)  
(\* Randy Hammock, KC6HUR, Post Office Box 463, Pasadena, CA. \*)  
(\* Our Zipcode is 91102. Again, and as always, we thank you. \*)  
(\* That ends the closed circuit with Newsline report \*)  
(\* number 901 for release on Friday, November 18, 1994 to \*)  
(\* follow. \*)  
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The following is a QST

The Mexican government rescues a DXpedition stranded after their boat engine fails at sea, ham radio runs the New York City Marathon and the founder of the Westlink Radio Network says it was definitely a good idea. These stories and more on Newsline report number 901 coming your way right now.

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#### DXpedition Rescue

It sounds like every DXchaser's dream. Seven hams set out on a DXpedition to a Mexican island 300 miles south of the southern tip of Baja. This, to coincide with the CQ Worldwide SSB Contest. But the voyage takes a frightening twist when the group becomes stranded in the Pacific. It's an incredible story of calm and anxiety. Of alleged negligence and clear thinking, and of compassion. Ed Kritsky, NT2X of New York City, and his fellow DX voyagers spent a week on Revilla Gigedos island in late October.

"It was not a pleasant experience. We got taken by the boat owner who, well if it were a car it would be called a lemon." Ed Kritsky, NT2X.

Kritsky sez the team was promised a nice furnished boat in good working condition. That's not what he sez was delivered.

"The boat had numerous violations was not supposed to be out in the ocean. There was less crew than was supposed to be. Instead of seven, there was five. It was ill prepared. It lacked any meaningful conveniences for an open sea sail. It didn't have safety equipment." NT2X.

With the DXpedition over, Kritsky and crew head back to LaPaz, Mexico. It's around midnight, in the Pacific, when the boat suffers a total engine failure.

"I was sleeping on the upper deck and was woken by the sound of a flare being launched. Now I didn't know what was going on

except I heard this load bang bang. There was the red flare going down." NT2X.

Kritsky sez the captain was not qualified to hold the job. He sez crew members didn't even know how to use their radios. So Kritsky grabs the mike of an Icom 725 and contacts a ham in Mesa, Arizona. The Arizona ham calls the U.S. Coast Guard in San Diego to report the boat's situation. The hams later contact the Mexican Navy which picks them up and brings them to a military base on Socorro island. The problem then becomes getting back to LaPaz. Kritsky sez the boat's owner refused to pay to send a pickup boat. The hams couldn't find a plane large enough to haul them and their equipment. Besides, the island's airspace is restricted. In the meantime, DX crew members were on the air getting offers of help from generous fellow hams.

"There were about 50 Mexican hams on the air for two days trying to locate the aircraft. Offering to take collections to get us the tickets, to get to pay for the aircraft." NT2X

Kritsky and the others finally wind up aboard a Mexican navy plane for the 2 hour flight to LaPaz. There, the hams are greeted by a crowd of cheering Mexican amateur radio operators. Kritsky credits his fellow hams for keeping cool during the ordeal.

"If it wasn't for amateurs aboard that boat I think we could have had serious problems. With mother nature and the big blue ocean out there I think this was probably really taking it to the extreme." NT2X.

With corporate support, the DX group members paid nearly \$15,000 for their experience. They're glad to have made it out alive. Ed Kritsky offers this advice if you're planning a DXpedition: Check out who you're dealing with and their equipment very carefully.

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#### NYC MARATHON

About 500 hams helped guide 25,000 runners through the streets of New York on Sunday, November 6th. This for the running of the 1994 New York City Marathon. Since the inception of this mega event, ham radio has played a key role. Educator Carole Perry, WB2MGP has been a marathon communicator for a number of years. She says that for everyone involved, ham radio provides peace of mind.

"The magnitude of the thousands and thousands of other people

who are involved in this, the runners and the other volunteers, the medical people, the food deliveries, the volunteers who run along side, the runners to give them their water. There's so much that goes into this and to feel like your one small part of it, that's very exciting by itself. But certainly the amateur radio part of it is extraordinary. It's peace of mind for the families, knowing where the runners are at all times. That communications, I think, is way under played. I don't think the hams get nearly enough credit for what they do." Carole Perry, WB2MGP.

Perry says that it is the dedication of one particular ham that makes it all happen.

"Certainly Steve Mendelsohn who can't say it about himself so I will say it for him, who heads this up from the Hudson Division, is an extraordinary organizer. He is right on top of things. I think the day after the marathon he starts planning for the next year. He's, from the top on down totally involved with different nets and getting people to volunteer and so on. And once you are in it, the enthusiasm of everybody whose involved in it kind of feeds on itself. I think a lot of the hams responsible for bringing other kinds of volunteers in as well which is an interesting spinoff and ripple effect." WB2MGP.

The Steve Mendelsohn that Carole is referring to is of course ARRL Hudson Division Director Steve Mendelsohn, WA2DHF.

And suffice to say that the New York City Marathon is well established as one of the most important events for those who like competition running. Thanks to Steve Mendelsohn, WA2DHF and five hundred other hams, its also an amateur radio communications exercise second to none.

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COMMENT DATE SET ON 2400 MHZ ISSUE

Turning to regulatory matters. The FCC has set December 19th, about one month from now, as the comment due date for a Notice of Proposed Rule Making to convert a block of spectrum from federal government to commercial use. This, includes two UHF bands shared by Amateur Radio on a secondary basis with the government.

As reported two weeks ago, the proposal would allocate 2390 to 2400, 2402 to 2417, both shared by amateurs, and 4660 to 4685 MHz to the Fixed and Mobile Services. The FCC says that it is required by the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 to adopt rules for such a reallocation by February 10, 1995.

The Commission now notes that it has already received a number of responses to its Notice of Inquiry on the proposed

reallocations. This includes formal comments from the amateur community including one from the American Radio Relay League.

The agency says it has also set a reply comment cutoff date on this NPRM. That date is January 3, 1995.

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#### ARRL COMMENTS ON DIGITAL PLAN

The ARRL has filed reply comments on FCC PR Docket 94-59, that proposes to allow automatic control of digital stations on the HF bands under certain specific conditions.

The League said that it shared concerns filed by some hams about the possibility of interference to amateurs using other modes, and urged the FCC to adopt its original proposal for specific subbands and other restrictions.

The ARRL made essentially the same recommendation in its comments on the FCC proposal in early October. By that time, the FCC had received comments from 15 parties, eight opposed to automatic HF control, five supporting the League's proposal for specific subbands, and two supporting the ARRL plan but with additional provisions for avoiding interference.

The League said in its reply comments on November 1st that since some parties suggest no restrictions, while others advocate no changes at all, that it, the ARRL, favored a middle course. The same one it originally had proposed and was the basis of the Commission's own Notice of Proposed Rule Making on the matter.

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#### ZAPPER-ZAPPED

The Zapper, a radio transmitter that can be altered to set off automobile radar detectors, has itself been zapped by the FCC. According to the Reuter News Service, Electronic Rainbow Inc. of Indianapolis, which advertised its transmitter as a way to stop speeders, said it has heeded a Federal Communications Commission order to stop selling the \$50 unit.

The company claims that device was originally intended for amateur radio operators communicate. But a check by Newsline of recent issues of QST, CQ, 73 and Amateur Radio Trader Magazines show no advertiser listing for either Electronic Rainbow or any microwave communications device by them for hams. And the Reuter story says that with only a few minor adjustments, the unit changes frequency to 10.525 gigahertz, which triggers alarms on radar detectors.

The FCC stopped short of saying that the Zapper is not really a piece of ham gear. It does note that the unit has not received federal approval and would likely be required to have safeguards to prevent its alternative use as a signal to radar detectors if

its ever again placed for sale. This is because radar detectors are illegal in several states, and a federal law prohibits truckers from using them. Had it refused to comply with the FCC order to quit selling the Zapper, the company faced a fine of \$10,000 per day.

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#### PIRATE PROSECUTION

Cable TV service pirates were put on notice November 7th when the Federal Communications Commission warned the public that it's illegal to tamper with converter and decoder boxes without permission of the cable operator.

The National Cable Television Association hailed the FCC's public notice. Jim Allen, head of NCTA's Office of Cable Signal Theft, said the announcement killed the arguments of third-party equipment brokers that engage in the sale of modified converter and decoders.

NCTA estimates the industry loses billions of dollars each year in cable programming theft. Under existing law, the illegal use of a converter and decoder is punishable by up to \$1,000 in fines and imprisonment of up to six months. Importers or makers of illegal equipment can face fines of up to \$50,000 and two years in prison.

FCC staffer John Reed said there was nothing new at all in the agency's announcement. However, he said the FCC issued the public notice at the request of NCTA, which has apparently seen a surge in cable piracy.

"There is no more argument," says Allen. "They are breaking the law."

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#### IRISH DIGIPEATER

From Ireland, N2DFP reports the Donegal Digipeater is up and running on 144.675 with a link for the EI5TCR Cluster. All reports have been excellent. The Node callsign is EI5TCR/2 with an alias of BARN 22.

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#### DX

In DX listen for Haiti back on the air. Missionaries HH1D and HH1T are Darlene Young, KB8CTC, and husband Tim, KB8CTD. The husband and wife duo reportedly operate between 14.260 and 14.350 MHz around 22:00 UTC and 7.288 MHz at 10:00 hours UTC. They are believed to be running a TS-450S from a solar charged battery system. QSL as they direct.



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## NEWSLINE GROWS

And finally, last week Newsline began a month long celebration to commemorate its 900th consecutive newscast. And, as those who were with us last week heard, Newsline actually began life in 1977 as the Westlink Radio Network. This when founder Jim Hendershot WA6VQP produced a bulletin for local Los Angeles airing that dealt with repeater deregulation. Ironically, the first year of the Westlink Radio news did not air on a repeater. According to Hendershot, it all began on 223.5 Mhz simplex.

"Well that is true. It started out because we felt the best way to distribute it was on simplex. We started it out on 223.5 Mhz. In reality the major distribution, at least the first year or so was on 223.5 Mhz and a growing number of cassettes." Jim Hendershot, WA6VQP.

While 223.5 MHz worked well for hams in Los Angeles, as word of the newscast spread nationwide Jim had to find a relatively inexpensive way to distribute it to the rest of the country. His first thought was to mail out tape cassettes. Little did WA6VQP know what this decision would lead to.

"It got to the point with me where I was doing something like a hundred cassettes a week, or some crazy thing like that. And it was just overwhelming, that's when things had to change." WA6VQP.

And change they did. About a year after he started the Westlink News, Jim's life took a new direction.

"I was already engaged to be married at that point. After I got married responsibility to the family was just too much. I married a very nice lady with, what shall I say an already made family. So I had four kids when I got married, to start with. It was a real challenge. So WestLink just had to move off to somebody that had more time, less responsibilities." WA6VQP.

It was the team of Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, Bill Orenstein, then KH6IAF -- later KH6QX, and Alan Kaul, W6RCL that became the lynch pins of the Westlink news organization. In the late '70's and early '80s that trio worked at refining the newscast. Hendershot says that it all was a good idea.

"You know it is always gratifying to know that there is still so much interest. And when I see how big it's become it was a good thing to start. I'm glad that it has done so well and it has

received so much acceptance." WA6VQP.

Well accepted today, that's true. But back seventeen years ago this was not the case. In fact, it took the words of a prominent FCC official and a few from a radio con-man to get the Westlink News established with the mainstream ham radio community. That part of the story, next week.

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And for this week, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline. You can write to us at:

Newsline  
P.O. Box 463  
Pasadena, CA  
91102

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